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SUICIDE SQUAD
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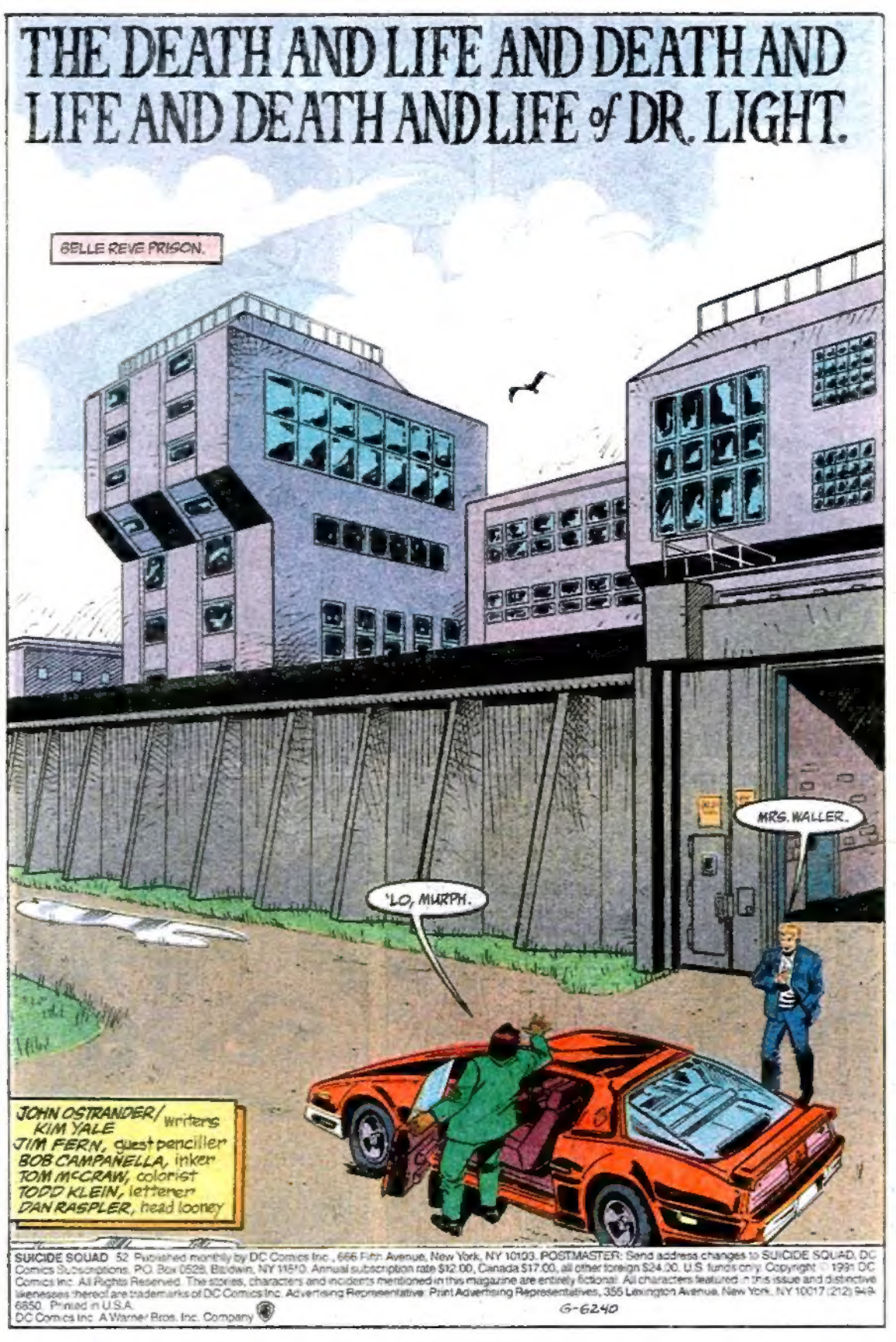
SUICIDE SQUAD
BY OSTRANDER, YALE, FERN & CAMPANELLA
A DOCTOR LIGHT-HEARTED TALE--
STARRING
THE DEVIL
AND
MRS. WALLER!
J.FERN

# THE DEATH AND LIFE AND DEATH AND LIFE AND DEATH AND LIFE of DR. LIGHT.

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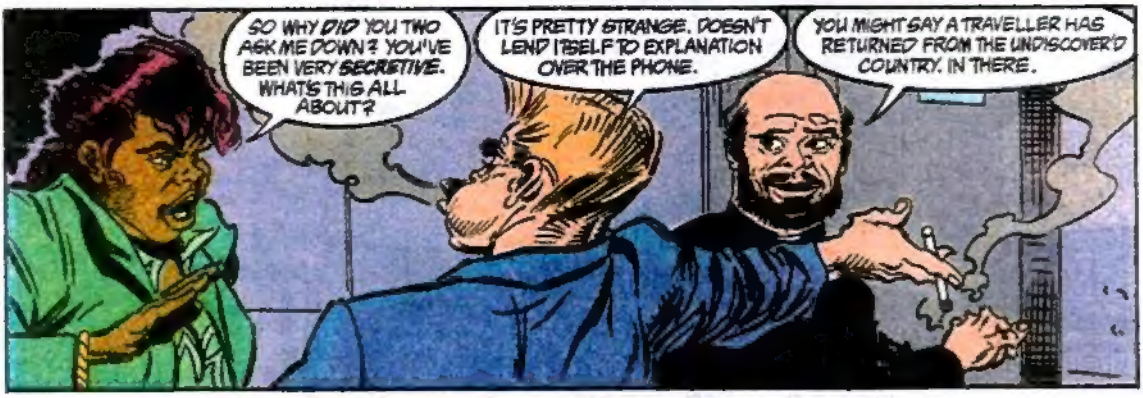
HOW'S THE NEW WARDEN?
HASTINGS? HE'S OKAY. DOESN'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU, THOUGH. TOOK SOME TALK TO CONVINCE HIM JUST TO CALL YOU--
--MUCH LESS ASK YOU DOWN HERE.

I CAN SEE HIS POINT. BELLE REVE'S BEEN THE CENTER OF ENOUGH CONTROVERSY BECAUSE OF THE SQUAD.
HEY, PADRE.
AMANDA. GOOD TO SEE YOU.


SO WHY DID YOU TWO ASK ME DOWN? YOU'VE BEEN VERY SECRETIVE. WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
IT'S PRETTY STRANGE. DOESN'T LEND ITSELF TO EXPLANATION OVER THE PHONE.
YOU MIGHT SAY A TRAVELLER HAS RETURNED FROM THE UNDISCOVER'D COUNTRY. IN THERE.

OH! MRS. WALLER! UHMM... UHHH...
HI THERE.

OKAY, WHAT'S THE STORY HERE?
AND I'M WARNING YOU--IT BETTER BE A DAMN GOOD ONE.

GEE, UHHH... WELL, I GUESS THERE'S A STORY...
...I DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD IT IS, BUT ITS ALL I HAVE...

FIND A BEGINNING. GO ON FROM THERE.
UMMM...OKAY. I GUESS I SHOULD START WITH MY DEATH ON APOKOLIPS.

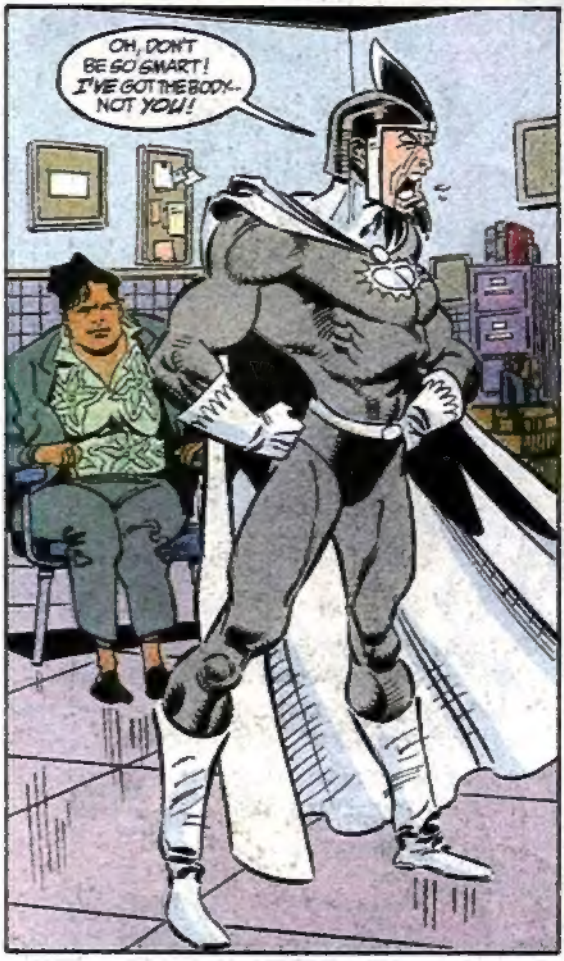
ALL RIGHT! I'LL GO BACK FURTHER! JUST... BUTT OUT! I HAVE THE BODY AND I'M TELLING THE STORY!

OKAY. YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN THAT?

UHHH... THERE WAS ANOTHER DR. LIGHT BEFORE ME. ACTUALLY, HE WAS MY PARTNER. JACOB FINLAY.
HE SORTA INVENTED THE COSTUME. JACOB WANTED TO BE A SUPERHERO. I SORTA KINDA ACCIDENTALLY... KILLED HIM. SO HIS GHOST IS KINDA HAUNTING ME. THAT'S WHO I WAS TALKING TO. JUST NOW.

UH-HUH.

HE'S THE REASON I DIED ON APOKOLIPS! JACOB PROMISED ME THAT IF I BECAME A HERO, EVERYONE WOULD LIKE ME!
HE WAS JUST SETTING ME UP TO GET KILLED!


OH, DON'T BE SO SMART! I'VE GOT THE BODY-- NOT YOU!

SO--WHAT HAPPENED AFTER YOU DIED? AND HOW'D YOU GET BACK?!

"WELL, I WAS IN HELL, ALONG WITH JACOB, AND THE DEVIL."

"THE DEVIL?"

"WELL, NO. HE WAS MORE LIKE A DEVIL. HIS NAME WAS MISTER BIFF A. SOMOUS."

"YOU MEAN MEPHISTOPHELES."

"NO, THAT WAS ANOTHER GUY. THIS DEVIL WAS MISTER BIFF."

POOR SPORT THESE SOULS BE, EH, MASTER?

BUT COME THE REVOLUTION, COME JUDGMENT DAY, WITH AN ARMY OF THE DAMNED SUCH AS THEY WILL WE STORM HEAVEN!

OH, SHUT UP!

SPLAT!

YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? THERE WON'T BE ANY REVOLUTION! WE REVOLTED ONCE BEFORE AND WE LOST!

UNDERSTAND? IT'S BUPKIS FOR ALL ETERNITY!

THEY TORMENT EACH OTHER, YOU TORMENT ME, ALL OF US TRAPPED TOGETHER--

--NO WONDER THEY CALL IT HELL.

PERHAPS THOSE TWO TORMENTED SOULS COULD PROVIDE YOU AMUSEMENT, MISTER BIFF?

I DOUBT IT, BUT I'M DOOMED TO TRY.
SNAP
HEY! DOCTOR LIGHT!

YES?

SIGHHHHHH-

I'VE DECIDED TO SEND ONE OF YOU BACK TO YOUR MORTAL BODY. GUESS WHICH ONE?
ME! ME!
ME! ME!

YOU GNIVELLING LITTLE TWIT! WHY SHOULD HE SEND YOU?!
I WAS UNFAIRLY TRICKED! SOMEBODY OWES ME A LIFE!

SILENCE! THIS IS MY DECISION TO MAKE-- AND IT'S ALREADY MADE!
ZAMMO!

NOOOO! WHY NOT ME?! WHY HIM?!
BECAUSE ARTHUR IS THE INEFFECTIVE LITTLE D'WEEB YOU CALL HIM. YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY FIND A WAY TO ESCAPE YOUR FATE.
ARTHUR I CAN TRUST TO UTTERLY MUCK IT UP.

CEMETARY
ZAMMO
S.R. VAUGHN 1890

WHERE AM I?
OH GOOD GRIEF! I MUST BE IN MY COFFIN! WELL, NO PROBLEM. I'LL JUST USE MY LIGHT POWERS TO BLAST OUT OF HERE...!

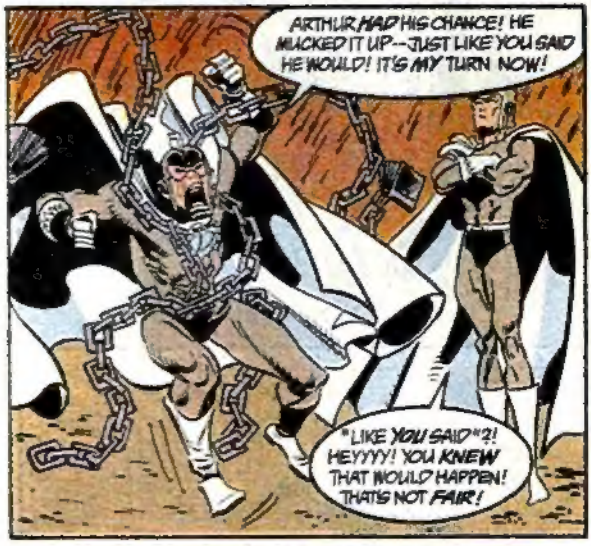
BZZZT

OOOOO-KAY. LET'S STAY CALM. THE COSTUME'S OUT OF JUICE. NEEDS SUNLIGHT TO RECHARGE.
NOT TO PANIC--THIS ISN'T EDGAR ALLAN POE. YOU WEREN'T BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE JUST TO SUFFOCATE IN YOUR OWN COFFIN. SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TO GET YOU OUT. JUST... WAIT FOR IT.
WAIT
WAIT
WAIT

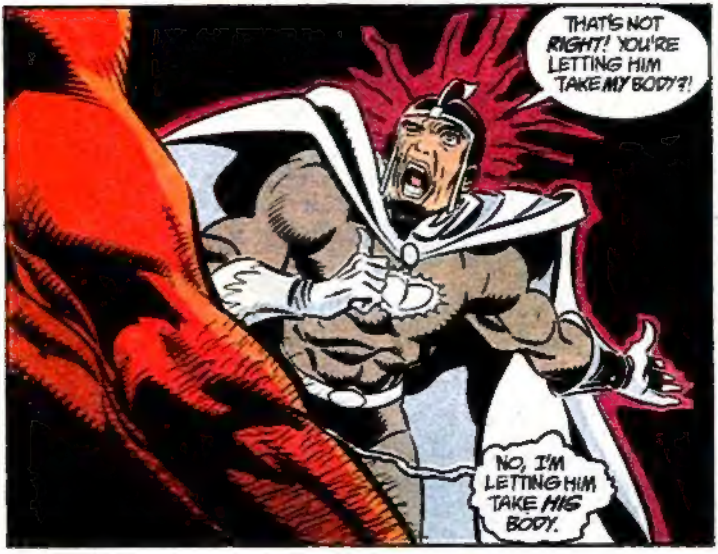
"AND? WHAT HAPPENED, LIGHT?"
"I...UH...I DIED. FOR THE SECOND TIME."
KEE KEE KEE!
NOT FAIR! NOT FAIR! I WAS TRICKED! AGAIN!
THAT WAS NOT NICE!
MY TURN! MY TURN!

OH, DO SHUTUP!
SPLAT!

CONFOUNDED LAUGH! LIKE FINGERNAILS ACROSS A BLACKBOARD!


ARTHUR HAD HIS CHANCE! HE MUCKED IT UP--JUST LIKE YOU SAID HE WOULD! IT'S MY TURN NOW!
"LIKE YOU SAID"?! HEYYYY! YOU KNEW THAT WOULD HAPPEN! THAT'S NOT FAIR!

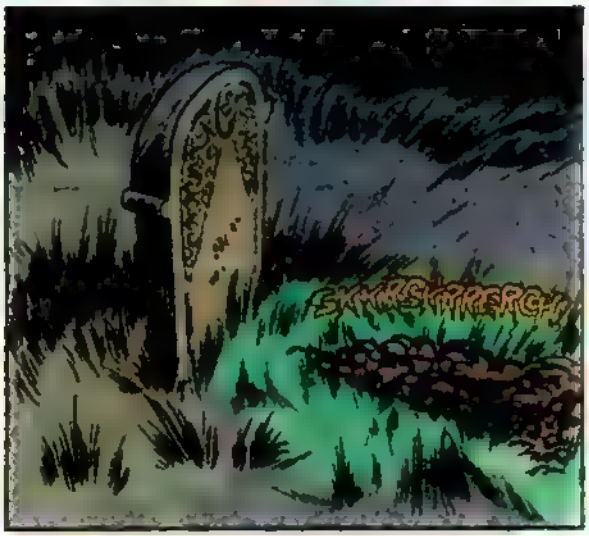
OF COURSE IT'S UNFAIR, YOU NITWIT! THIS IS HELL!
IT IS, HOWEVER, JACOB'S TURN!
ZAMMO!


THAT'S NOT RIGHT! YOU'RE LETTING HIM TAKE MY BODY?!
NO, I'M LETTING HIM TAKE HIS BODY.

THAT MAKES IT ALMOST AMUSING.

ZAMMO!

JAMIE
FINLAY

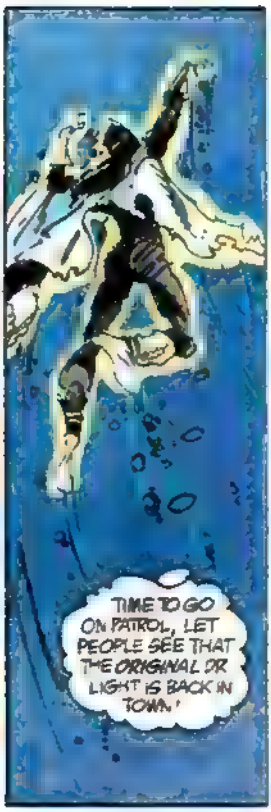


JAMIE
FINLAY

SHUMP!

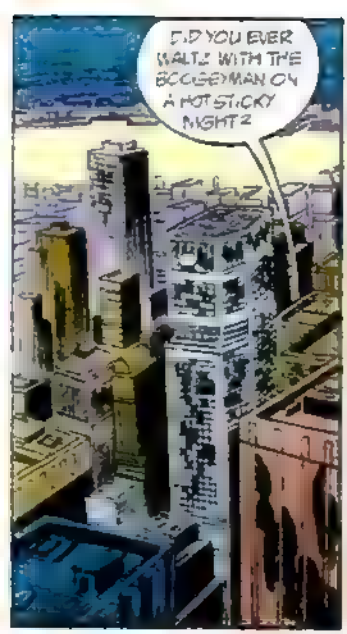
AT LAST! THE TRUE, THE ORIGINAL DOCTOR LIGHT LIVES AGAIN!

BODY'S A LITTLE STIFF, BUT NEVER MIND! TO BE EXPECTED! AFTER ALL, I'VE BEEN DEAD SOMETIME. NEED TO GET THE RUST OUT, THAT'S ALL.


TIME TO GO ON PATROL, LET PEOPLE SEE THAT THE ORIGINAL DR LIGHT IS BACK IN TOWN!

THIS IS BRILLIANT, MASTER! BUT TELL ME, PLEASE--WHY IS HIS BODY SO DESICCATED WHEN THE OTHER DR. LIGHT'S BODY WASN'T?!
BECAUSE IT'S FUNNIER THIS WAY.

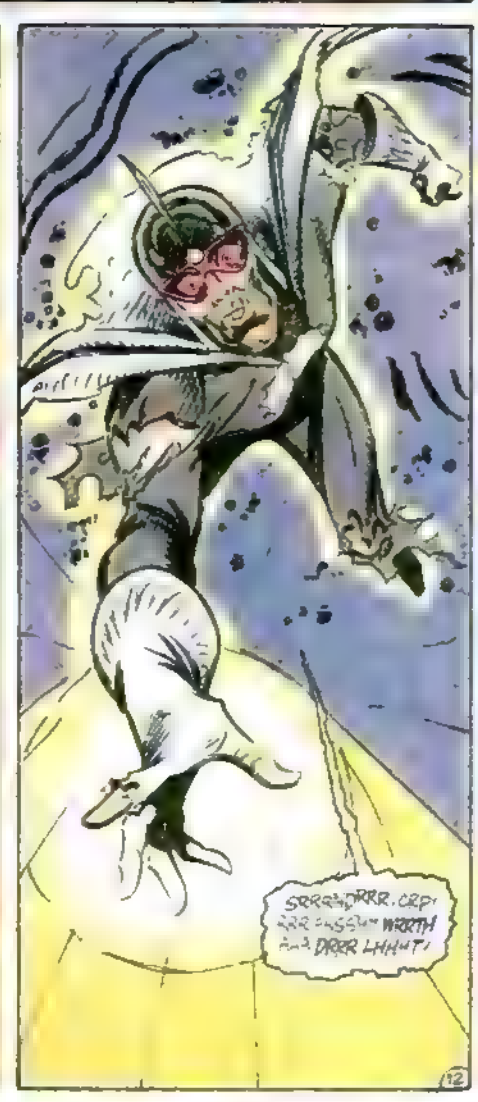
NOW SHUT UP! HE'S COMING TO TOWN!


DID YOU EVER WALTZ WITH THE BOOGEYMAN ON A HOT STICKY NIGHT?

LEAVE MY WIFE ALONE, YOU--!
GHOULS

ZING
ZING
ZING
ZING
MMMRRPHHR MURRODR, PRRNNK!
WHAT?

YAAACH!


SRRRGRRR. CRP! SRR GASSH WRRTH RAA DRRR LHHUT!

DRAT! MOUTH'S NOT WORKING PROPERLY YET. STILL, A DRAMATIC GESTURE SHOULD MAKE MY INTENTIONS PLAIN.

BACK! BACK, YOU MONSTER OF HELL!
NO! WAIT! I'M A HERO!

THIS IS A CHRISTIAN, GOD-FEARING FAMILY, AND NO UNDEAD MINION OF SATAN WILL CLAIM US!
THE OTHER DR. LIGHT! HE WAS A VILLAIN! I'M HERE TO SAVE YOU!

GET HIM, PA! GRIND HIS BONES INTO PASTE!
RIP!
KRAK!
SHUNK
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU PEOPLE?!

THAT WILL TEACH THAT STINKING, UNGODLY FIEND TO THREATEN GOD-FEARING PEOPLE!
NOW, THEN-- WHERE WERE WE?

CYAAAAHHH!

THAT'S THAT.
COME, MOTHER-BIDDE WE HAVE A FEW MORE DARK ALLEYS TO PATROL BEFORE WE GO HOME.

THEY DON'T LIKE ME...THEY REALLY DON'T LIKE ME...!
BRILLIANT, MASTER! A MAGNIFICENT BLEND OF SATIRE AND SAVAGE BLACK HUMOR!

OH, SHUT UP!
IT WAS PATHETIC! CRUDE BUFFOONERY FOR CHEAP LAUGHS.

MAYBE OUR NEXT SCENARIO WILL BE BETTER.

UMMM... YOU PLAN TO REINCARNATE ME AND THEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS GOING TO HAPPEN AND I'M GOING TO WIND UP DEAD IN SOME HORRIBLE FASHION AND COME BACK HERE, RIGHT?
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

IT'S OKAY JACOB CAN HAVE MY TURN.

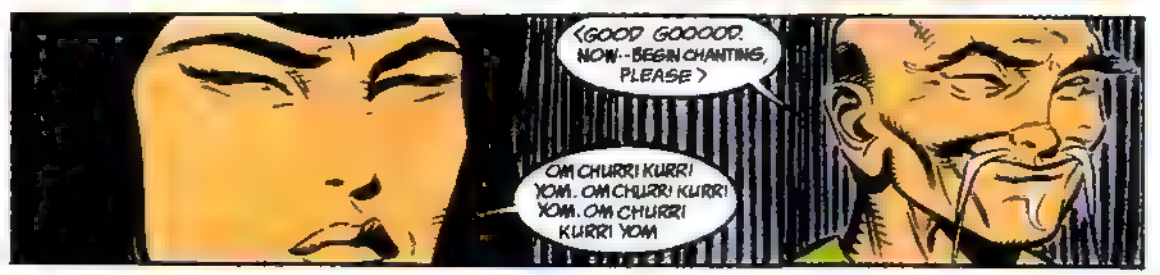
ZAMMO!
NO, HE CAN'T.

"I WOUND UP NEXT IN TOKYO."
ASAHI

AH, AH! MUST KEEP BOTH EYES CLOSED, MS. HOSHI!

<YOU MUST GIVE THIS A CHANCE TO WORK. I KNOW YOU APPROACH THE CONCEPT OF OUT OF BODY TRAVEL--ASTRAL PROJECTION--WITH A SCIENTIST'S SKEPTICAL EYE, MS. HOSHI, BUT YOU DID COME TO ME. NOW CLOSE YOUR EYE. CLOSE IT.>

<CLOSE YOUR DAMN EYE!>


<GOOD GOOOOD. NOW--BEGIN CHANTING, PLEASE>
OM CHURRI KURRI YOM. OM CHURRI KURRI YOM. OM CHURRI KURRI YOM

THIS FEELS SO STUPID. I MUST REMEMBER NEVER TO LOSE A BET WITH TETSUO AGAIN
OM CHURRI KURRI YOM

WHOA!

AMAZING! IF I WAS NOT EXPERIENCING IT MYSELF, I WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED ASTRAL PROJECTION WAS POSSIBLE!

<HEY! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY BODY?!>
OHHHH... WHERE AM I THIS TIME...?

EEK! I'M ALL SQUISHY!

<EXCUSE ME, SIR. WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MS. HOSHI'S BODY?>
<INTERLOPER! GET OUT OF MY BODY?!>

ARRRGH!
WHAT IS THAT PAIN?! I'VE NEVER FELT SUCH...

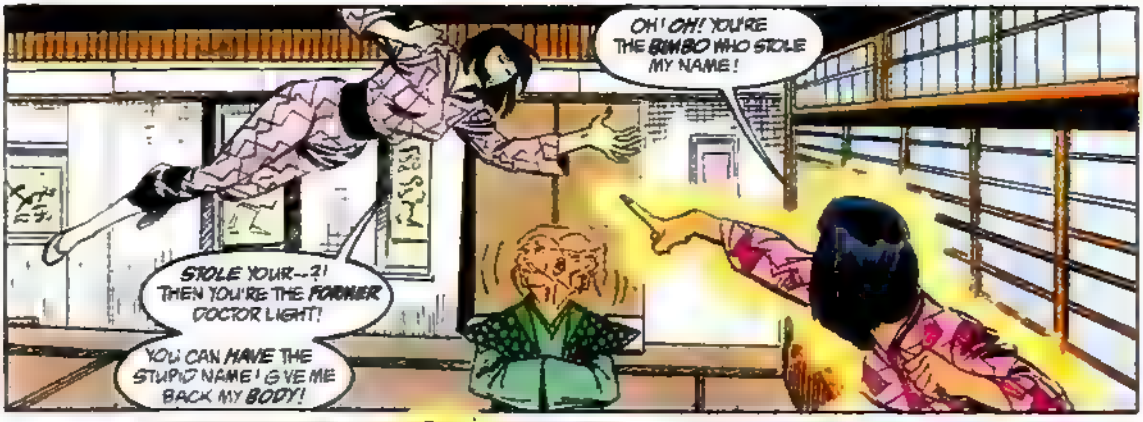
OH NO!

NO NO NO NO NO NO!

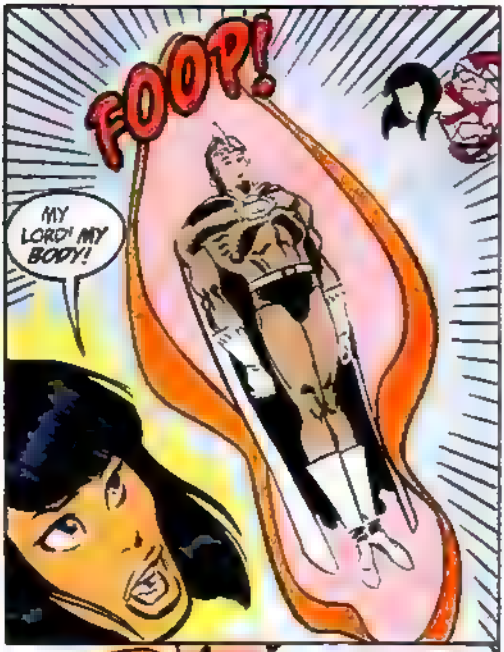
<WHO IS THAT, PRIEST?!>
<THERE'S GOOD NEWS. IT'S NOT A DEMON.>
RRRRRRR!

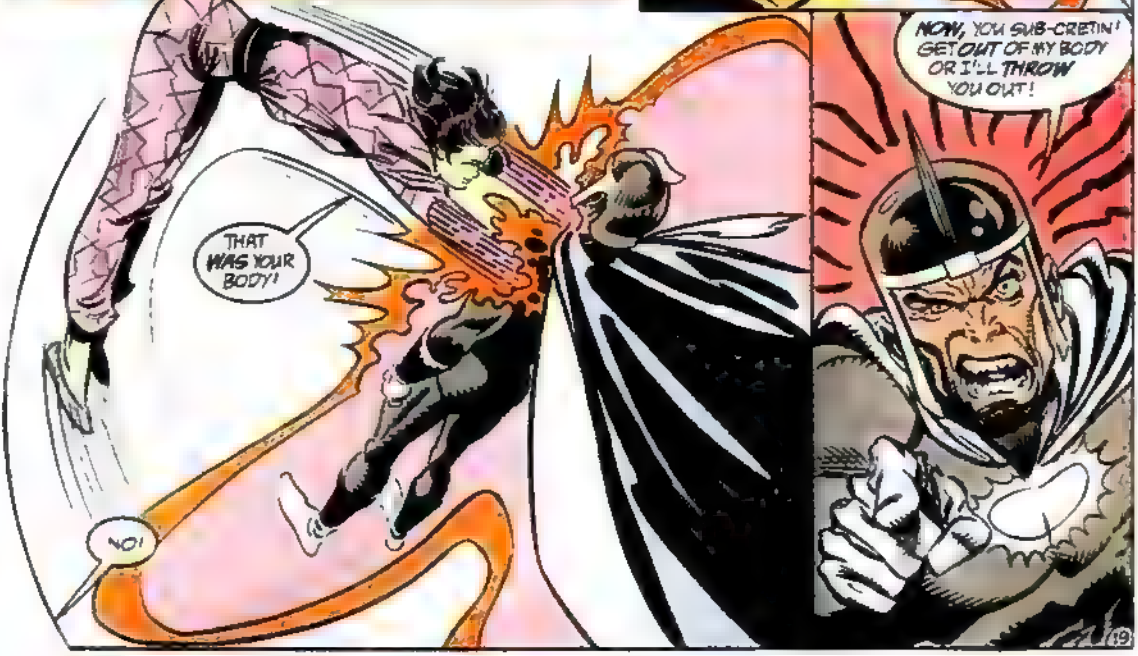
<SOME GOOD NEWS.>
<THE FIRST STEP IS TO FIND OUT WHO THIS IS. SPIRIT, I COMMAND YOU-- TELL ME YOUR NAME.>
OHHHHHH-- DOESN'T ANYONE HERE SPEAK ENGLISH?

I SPEAK SOME ENGLISH. PLEASE, WHO YOU ARE?
:SNIFF!: WELL, I'M USUALLY DOCTOR LIGHT...
NO, I AM DOCTOR LIGHT! YOU'RE JUST WEARING MY BODY!


OH! OH! YOU'RE THE BIMBO WHO STOLE MY NAME!
STOLE YOUR--?! THEN YOU'RE THE FORMER DOCTOR LIGHT!
YOU CAN HAVE THE STUPID NAME! GIVE ME BACK MY BODY!

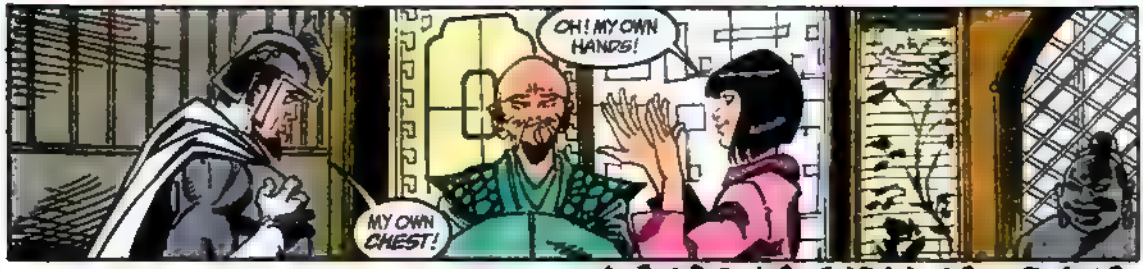
NO! AND YOU CAN'T MAKE ME! MAYBE I'LL ENJOY BEING A GIRL! NYAH NYAH!
A SMALL SPELL MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE...
RAHHHR!


FOOP!
MY LORD! MY BODY!

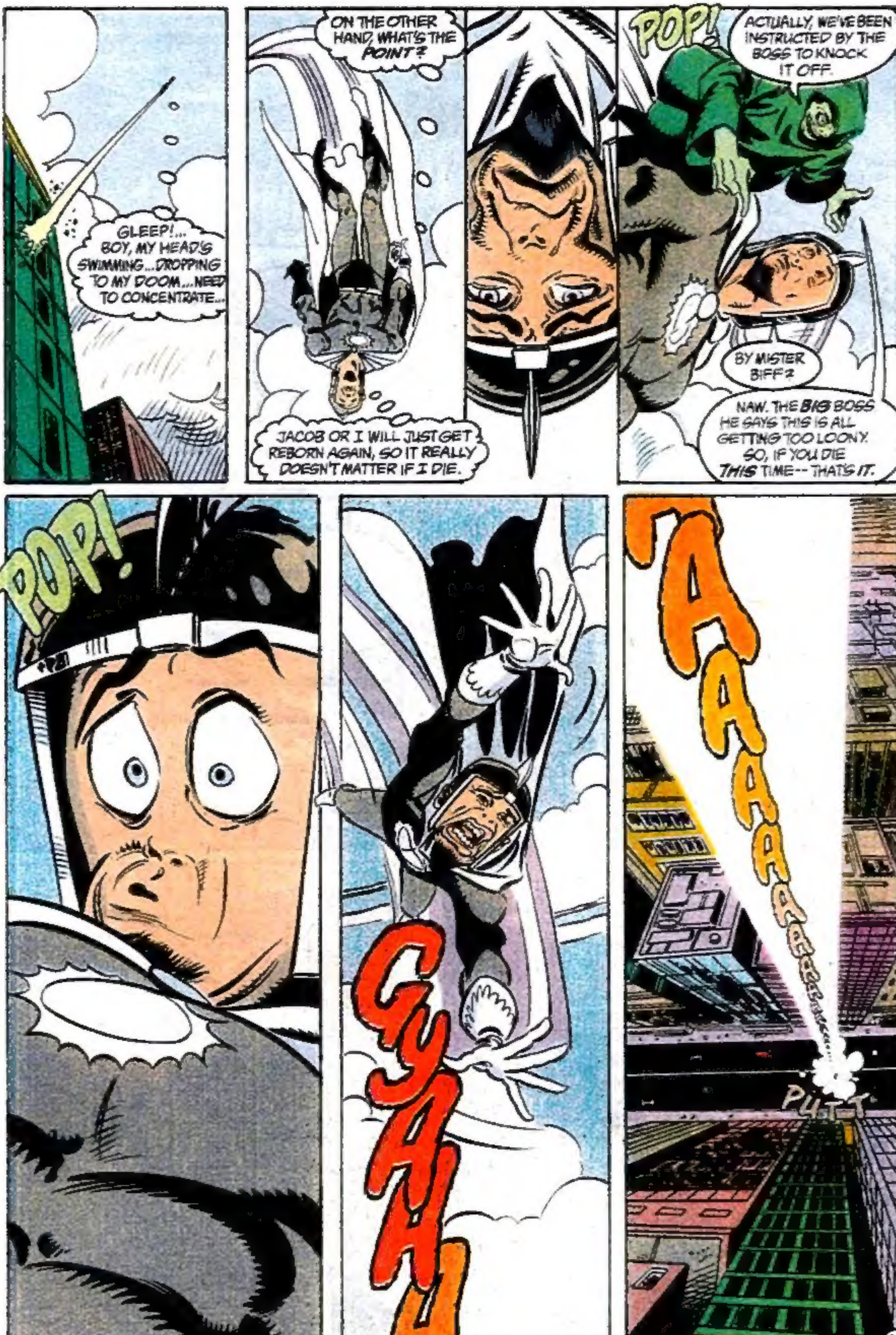

NOW, YOU SUB-CRETIN! GET OUT OF MY BODY OR I'LL THROW YOU OUT!
THAT WAS YOUR BODY!
NO!

TAKE IT! I DON'T WANT IT! GIVE ME BACK MY BODY!
ARE YOU SAYING THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY BODY, YOU CHAUVINIST PIG?!

ENOUGH VIOLENCE. A SIMPLE SOUL TRANSFERENCE SPELL--AND ALL SHALL BE AS IT SHOULD BE.


OH! MY OWN HANDS!
MY OWN CHEST!

NOW GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!
WHAMMO!



GLEEP!... BOY, MY HEAD'S SWIMMING...DROPPING TO MY DOOM...NEED TO CONCENTRATE...
ON THE OTHER HAND, WHAT'S THE POINT?
JACOB OR I WILL JUST GET REBORN AGAIN, SO IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER IF I DIE.
POP!
ACTUALLY, WE'VE BEEN INSTRUCTED BY THE BOSS TO KNOCK IT OFF.
BY MISTER BIFF?
NAW. THE BIG BOSS HE SAYS THIS IS ALL GETTING TOO LOONY. SO, IF YOU DIE THIS TIME-- THAT'S IT.
POP!
GYAH!
AAAAA
PUT-T

I...HURT...

IF I'M DEAD, WHY DO I HURT?

POP

BECAUSE WE LIED. WE DO THAT IN HELL. BUT MAYBE NEXT TIME YOU DIE, IT WILL BE FOR REAL. ENJOY YOUR "LIFE." BWA-HA-HA!

...SO AFTER I PICKED MYSELF UP AND PULLED MYSELF TOGETHER, I FINALLY MADE MY WAY BACK HERE TO BELLE REVE.

UH-HUH. AND WHY'D YOU DO THAT? WHAT IS IT YOU WANT FROM ME, LIGHT?

WHY, I WANT TO REJOIN THE TEAM, OF COURSE! I WANT TO REJOIN THE SUICIDE SQUAD.

UH-UH. NO. NOPE. NO WAY. NOT ON YOUR LIFE--ANY OF THEM. I RUN A SERIOUS OPERATION. GO JOIN THE JUSTICE LEAGUE!

BUT I USED TO FIGHT ALL THOSE PEOPLE! OH, PLEASE, MRS. WALLER! PLEEEEEEEASE!

PLEEEEASE?!

NO!

MURPH, PADRE--I'M GOING TO GET YOU TWO FOR THIS!

STOP SLOBBERING ON MY SHOES, LIGHT! FOR THE LAST TIME--NO!

NEXT--A CHANGE OF TONE AND A CHANGE OF LOCATION AND A NEW MEMBER OF THE SQUAD AS WE BEGIN THE DRAGON'S HORDE!

# SUICIDE NOTES

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Dear Editor:

I found many things about SUICIDE SQUAD #48 praiseworthy, especially the special guest star. The cover was a unique one, with a solid double-effect. Was any special process used to make it?

To begin with, maybe it's time you gave poor Count Vertigo a break. He's been near blown to bits on Apokolips; been through a bloody civil war in Europe; become Ivy's humiliated slave; and now he's going through cold-turkey drug withdrawal. He could use a short vacation.

And on page 3, we have Amanda Waller explaining her reasons for allowing herself to be sent to prison. It *listens* good. I hope it's true. But even after four years, I can't shake the feeling that Amanda Waller began the Suicide Squad just so she would never have to go back to Chicago. She says if she'd gotten away with the triple murder of the LOA, she would have "undermined everything she was defending." For four years, Amanda Waller has been defending mostly her big desk and her big position. Her idea of solving the crime rate is to put more criminals back on the street. For somebody who had three members of her family murdered by the same sort of person she recruits, she seems insensitive to the rights of the victim. *Has* a more caring and wiser Amanda Waller emerged from prison? By putting on the Thinker's helmet, she took quite a risk for someone she doesn't even know. There was a small controversy because the latest WHO'S WHO listed her as "supporting cast" instead of "hero." I agree with that characterization, because she's crossed the line so many times that she won't qualify as a "hero" until she makes up for *all* of her crimes. And that's what they were—crimes.

Congrats to Geof Isherwood on the computer-art pages, which were terrif and unique.

Now, Batgirl. And that's what I call her, and that's what she'll *always* be to most people—even though "Batgirl" seems to be a dirty word out at DC right now. From THE KILLING JOKE on, she's been treated as a piece of disposable garbage by her own book. On the rare occasions she gets into a panel in the Batman books, she's in a cemetery or doing nothing. And when she appears as Oracle, it's all too fleeting and the books she appears in are quickly cancelled. Far too much emphasis is being placed on what she *can't* do and way too little on what she still *can* do, which is plenty. Franklin D. Roosevelt got to be President of the U.S.A. from a chair, and did a good job of it. How many of the DC writers have bothered to read up on the handicapped and their accomplishments before tackling a Barbara Gordon? What about the new model wheelchairs that enable paralytics to stand erect? The dog-companions that perform dozens of tasks to assist a handicapped person, and take years to train in a burgeoning market? One of the real world's leading "skip tracers" (bounty hunters) is a wheelchair person. Barbara Gordon is the closest thing to a born hero I've seen. She learned more at the breakfast table with her father than most detectives do in years of classroom study. Capable of defending herself, she preferred the intellectual side of the job to the violent, but could hold her own in any situation. A certain person acquainted with the BATMAN-line policy was quoted in a fanzine as saying that Batgirl's motto was "Gee, wouldn't it be fun to go out and fight crime?" This is the remark of an imbecile. Look at the Randall-Kitson BATGIRL SPECIAL. Find one panel where it doesn't look like Barbara Gordon was born to wear that costume. You can't. I realize that one of the chief points of THE KILLING JOKE is that it's an unjust world sometimes and that the worst things sometimes happen to the best people. But the world will never be so small that there won't be room for a Batwoman. You went to a lot of trouble getting her into that chair; now DC should go to greater lengths to get her out of it and back on the rooftops. After two and a half *years*, the focus is finally on her again—where it belongs. I hope she can keep fighting the "good fight" and not give in to her rage. When a Booster Gold can get his own team, don't tell me there's no room for a Barbara Gordon—one who will be better and more driven than ever because of her ordeal.

Charles D. Brown
Brentwood, NY

* * * * *

Dear Suicidals:

Aside from the cheap sales tactics on the cover (which I won't dwell on), SUICIDE SQUAD #48 was another top-quality issue. Don't you guys ever rest?

Glad to see the cooperation between the Squad and the IMHS. I hope this will be an ongoing occurrence. The characters from FIRESTORM were too good to go into limbo just because the series was cancelled.

Actually, this issue was relatively slow-paced (compared to the previous two storylines), but it was no less exciting. I think Amanda's the only person who's been able to exert her own will over the Thinker's helmet. Hmm...Amanda Waller and Maxwell Lord sounds to me like a Presidential ticket in '92!

Vertigo in detox is not a pretty sight. Maybe he'll get new powers out of the experience. I'm looking forward to seeing him and Ivy go at it.

It's always bugged me that Barbara Gordon just opened the door for the Joker. She's right—one would have expected the former Batgirl to know better. It's natural for her to feel guilty, but I hope she gets over it. There's not much anyone can do with someone like the Joker.

Amanda still has access to prisoners in Belle Reve, right? So, potentially, she could pull out anyone from the Riddler to Bolt. Why not do a story with a bunch of under-used characters, just to shake things up? For a "meta-human" team, there sure aren't many super-human members!

Eagerly looking forward to the big five-oh...

Julio Diaz
8713 Linda Court
Tampa, FL 33604

* * * * *

Dear Dan,

I am very impressed with the manner in which Barbara Gordon (Oracle) has finally had a forum where she could face her fears, stemming from THE KILLING JOKE up to this matter with Cliff Carmichael, the New Thinker. More on Cliffy in a moment, but here's a heartfelt thanks for finally having the inspiration to consider, anyway, adding Oracle to the Squad. The only problem here, I 'spose, is that Babs may have to come up with a new costume, after a fashion, to fit her current alter ego. It may be unnecessary, though, if she maintains one-to-one communication with Amanda or Simon, and leaves it at that. We shall soon see.

Adam Cray, a.k.a. the New Atom. I'll be danged if he isn't the son of a certain corrupt politico who gave the Wall trouble two years ago. Perhaps Adam is motivated by making up for his dad's past sins? I think so.

Cliff has come a long way from his introduction in FIRESTORM's original series some twelve years ago. He's worse than ever! This nerd could've been just another egghead if he'd keep his mind in the right place. But why

chase after Oracle? Jealousy? Man, this turkey'd have trouble with the Phantom Stranger or Dr. Fate if either one crossed his path. Better go back to being a plain old nerd, Cliffy. You need to rejoin the human race.

Happily awaiting issue #50...

Jacob Gilbert
118 Fourth Street, Apt. 1
Troy, NY 12180

*Thanks for writing, Jacob.*

* * * * *

**Dear Good Guys,**

**Well, I guess it was only a matter of time before you guys hopped onto the cyberpunk bandwagon. After all, cyberpunks are to the '90s what ninjas were to the '80s. Geof Isherwood has done another remarkable job here, and I sure would like to see his pencils on one of the Batman titles in the near future. The Steve Lightle cover was a real eye-catcher, too.**

The opening conversation between Waller and LaGrieve was handled beautifully. It helped answer a lot of questions that were bouncing in my head for the last couple of months. I certainly hope that LaGrieve and the Institute will both stick around for awhile. The return of Oracle to these pages was also something I really enjoyed. We had a glimpse of what Barbara was going through inside, and that really spoke volumes for her character.

Now, as far as I know, Belle Reve is still standing. So how about an update on the staff working there? They were a bunch of pretty strong characters, and it'll be a real pity if John Ostrander forgot about them.

And now that the Squad has lost its government status, I suppose Waller won't be springing any more bad guys out of prisons. Does this mean that we won't be seeing any more additions to the Squad? How about having some new villains walk up to Waller and offer their expertise? Also, will more of their missions be taking place on foreign soil? I hope so.

Finally please do a supernatural story and...wait a second...that's a zombie on the last page, right? Are you guys psychic or what?

Yours truly,
Melvin Yong
5A Lloyd Road
Singapore 0923

*Melvin, you asked for it, you got it! A visit to Belle Reve and a supernatural story all rolled into #52.*

* * * * *

**Dear Dan, John, Kim, Luke, Geof, Tom, and Todd:**

I own very few BATMAN comics, but one of them is THE KILLING JOKE, and I thought that Norman Breyfogle's homage to it on the cover of SUICIDE SQUAD #49 was a failure. On Brian Bolland's cover, the Joker's smile was horrifying only after you'd plunged into Alan Moore's story and realized who the Harlequin of Hate was asking to smile and what he had done to her; more strikingly, Brian's Joker was himself smiling. Barbara Gordon wasn't, and she held a gun, not a camera. Gee, just what we need, another tough-looking, humorless person with a large weapon...

"Out of Control" felt like a stall for #50, which *should* be worth the wait, although I'd hesitate to call #49 a failure, in spite of the damned coyness over the new Atom (Adam Cray? Gosh, "Adam" sounds like "Atom," and "Cray" contains the same three letters that "Ray," as in "Ray Palmer," starts with—and the new Atom's repressed smile on page 6 suggested that he found the name amusing. Deadshot killed *Senator* Cray, and you don't have to be Nathaniel Christopher Adam to find "Adam Cray" either a put-on or something out of a Charlton "action hero" adventure) and the uninvolving handling of Oracle. Certainly, there was tension in that: *would* Babs kill? But John Ostrander and Kim Yale kept the real action physical, not mental, and Amanda Waller beat the New Thinker, not Oracle, Amanda's assault was more compelling than Barbara's uncertainty. (Somewhere, in New York City, Ron Raymond smiles for no good reason: Cliff's had a pounding coming for years. If you're going to put Cliff to "more *constructive* uses," please work in his cousin, Hugo Hammer, like Barbara a cripple, and *maybe* Firehawk.)

Deadshot's costume problem may reflect that "certain percentage" of put-on that Amanda mentioned, but I found it absurd that he had no backup costume—and a waste that we didn't see Ben Turner look for the New Thinker and have a little mishap. On the other hand, I enjoyed seeing Simon LaGrieve grapple with such strong-willed individuals as Mrs. Waller and General Stuart, and the latter's announcement about the zombie's prize set up "The Legacy of Rick Flag" nicely, and Julio Diaz's letter in "Suicide Notes" did the rest. (You hear good rumors, pal: I just hope some of 'em are true.)

In addition, Luke McDonnell and Geof Isherwood cooked on the artwork, while Tom and Todd waited for no man and iced the cake with murky colors and moody lettering. (That's a pun, Messrs. McCraw and Klein; keep up the good work.) All in all, the likelihood of my dropping SUICIDE SQUAD with #50 has disappeared entirely, but I think I found more when we were "In Control" in #48 than when we were "Out of Control" here.

See you next month, next year, and next decade.

Very truly yours,
Charles J. Sperling
Flushing, NY

*Same decade, Charles, but thanks just the same. I'm glad you'll be with us for the long haul.*

The NEXT ISSUE BOX was sinking like a leaf: SUICIDE SQUAD #53 begins our next major plot line, "The Dragon's Horde." Amanda is approached by Japanese parties interested in securing the Squad for a mission in Asia. The Yakuza, disenfranchised Soviet war veterans, the Khmer Rouge, new villains, and special guest star Katana of the Outsiders all mixed together in a multi-part epic, where death is the only break from intrigue.

What does that mean? I don't know, but maybe *you* will after reading SUICIDE SQUAD #53, Part One of "The Dragon's Horde." —"Dead Earnest."

*—Dan Raspler*